

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A physical therapy apparatus configured to stretch a hamstring in a leg of a patient, comprising:

- 5 a) a seat back configured to receive a torso of the patient;
 b) a leg board, pivotally coupled to the seat back, configured to receive the leg
 of the patient; and
 c) means for securing the leg of the patient to the leg board to maintain the
 legs in a substantially straight configuration.

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2. An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:

 means for selectively adjusting and maintaining an angular orientation
 between the seat back and the leg board.

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3. An apparatus in accordance with claim 2, wherein the means for selectively
adjusting and maintaining the angular orientation includes:

 an elongated threaded rod, coupled between the seat back and the leg board,
 rotatable with respect to the seat back and the leg board, and threadably engaging a
 threaded coupler secured to one of the seat back and the leg board such that rotating
20 the rod causes the seat back and the leg board to move with respect to one another.

4. An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the seat back and the leg board
are selectively adjustable between approximately 150 to 90 degrees with respect to one
another.

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5. An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the seat back is substantially
vertical.

6. An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:

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 a tray, disposed in front of, and spaced-apart from, the seat back.

7. An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:

 a) a base, supporting the seat back and the leg board, configured to be
 disposed on a support surface;

- b) the seat back having a lower end slidably engaging the base; and
- c) the seat back being selectively oriented between i) a substantially vertical orientation, and ii) an inclined position in which the seat back forms an obtuse angle with respect to the support surface.

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8. An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:

- a) a base, supporting the seat back and the leg board, configured to be disposed on a support surface;
- b) at least one rail, associated with the base;
- 10 c) the seat back having a lower end slidably engaging the at least one rail; and
- d) a support arm, extending between the seat back and the base, and being pivotally coupled to both the base and the seat back.

9. An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the leg board extends

15 substantially the entire length of the leg of the user.

10. A chair apparatus configured to stretch a hamstring in a leg of a patient, comprising:

- a) a seat back configured to receive a torso of the patient;
- 20 b) a leg board, pivotally coupled to the seat back, configured to receive the leg of the patient;
- c) the leg board extending substantially the entire length of the leg of the user;
- d) a knee strap configured to secure the leg of the patient to the leg board to maintain the leg in a substantially straight configuration; and
- 25 e) means for selectively adjusting and maintaining an angular orientation between the seat back and the leg board.

11. An apparatus in accordance with claim 10, wherein the means for selectively adjusting and maintaining the angular orientation includes:

- 30 an elongated threaded rod, coupled between the seat back and the leg board, rotatable with respect to the seat back and the leg board, and threadably engaging a threaded coupler secured to one of the seat back and the leg board such that rotating the rod causes the seat back and the leg board to move with respect to one another.

12. An apparatus in accordance with claim 10, wherein the seat back and the leg board are selectively adjustable between approximately 150 to 90 degrees with respect to one another.

5 13. An apparatus in accordance with claim 10, wherein the seat back is substantially vertical.

14. An apparatus in accordance with claim 10, further comprising:
a tray, disposed in front of, and spaced-apart from, the seat back.

10 15. An apparatus in accordance with claim 10, further comprising:
a) a base, supporting the seat back and the leg board, configured to be disposed on a support surface;
b) the seat back having a lower end slidably engaging the base; and
15 c) the seat back being selectively oriented between i) a substantially vertical orientation, and ii) an inclined position in which the seat back forms an obtuse angle with respect to the support surface.

16. An apparatus in accordance with claim 10, further comprising:
20 a) a base, supporting the seat back and the leg board, configured to be disposed on a support surface;
b) at least one rail, associated with the base;
c) the seat back having a lower end slidably engaging the at least one rail; and
d) a support arm, extending between the seat back and the base, and being
25 pivotally coupled to both the base and the seat back.

17. A method for stretching a hamstring of a leg of a patient, comprising the steps of:
a) positioning the patient on an apparatus having a seat back and a leg board pivotally coupled together with a torso of the patient disposed against the seat back
30 and the leg of the patient disposed against the leg board;
b) securing the leg of the patient to the leg board in a substantially straight configuration;

c) selectively forming a desired initial obtuse angle between the seat back and the leg board, and thus the leg and torso of the patient, to stretch the hamstring of the leg of the patient; and

d) maintaining the desired obtuse angle for a predetermined initial period of time.

18. A method in accordance with claim 17, further comprising the steps of:

a) reducing the angle between the seat back and the leg board, and thus the leg and torso of the patient, to a subsequent smaller angle; and

b) maintaining the subsequent smaller angle for another predetermined period of time.

19. A method in accordance with claim 17, further comprising the step of:

reducing the angle between the seat back and the leg board while the patient is disposed in the chair.

20. A method in accordance with claim 17, wherein the step of selectively forming a desired initial obtuse angle further includes forming an angle between approximately 150 to 90 degrees between the leg and the torso.

21. A method in accordance with claim 17, further comprising the step of:

securing a waist of the patient adjacent a pivot point between the seat back and the leg board.

22. A method in accordance with claim 17, further comprising the step of:

orienting the seat back, and thus the torso of the patient, in a substantially vertical orientation.

23. A method in accordance with claim 17, further comprising the step of:

providing a tray adjacent the seat back.

24. A method in accordance with claim 17, wherein the patient has cerebral palsy.